

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicant claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of German Application No. 19934410.8 filed July 22, 1999. Applicant also claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 of PCT/EP00/06092 filed June 29, 2000. The international application under PCT article 21(2) was not published in English.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention--

On Page 1, between lines 3 and 4, please insert:

--2. The Prior Art--

On page 4, between lines 12 and 13, please insert:

--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--

Please revise the first complete paragraph in lines 6 to 24 on Page 5 to read as follows:

--The invention provides a process for the separation and purification of an aqueous mixture comprising the main components acetic acid, formic acid and high boilers by extraction with a solvent in a circulation process, which comprises feeding the raffinate stream containing a major part of the water to a solvent stripping column (11) for removal of the water and

conveying the extract stream to a solvent distillation column (8) from which, in a first step, a mixture (A) comprising water and solvent is separated off via the top and a mixture (B) comprising acetic acid, formic acid and high boilers is separated off via the bottom, separating the formic acid off from the mixture (B) in column (29) and subsequently fractionating the remaining mixture (B) into pure acetic acid and high boilers in an acetic acid distillation column (5), and conveying the mixture (A) to a phase separator (25) from which the resulting aqueous phase containing residual solvent is recirculated to the solvent stripping column (11) and the organic phase is recirculated to the extractor (7).--

On Page 6, above line 1, please insert:

--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 shows an apparatus for carrying out the separation and purification process of the invention;

FIG. 2 shows the apparatus of FIG. 1 plus a recirculation back to the extractor; and

FIG. 3 shows the apparatus of FIG. 1 plus a formic acid distillation column.--